

Town of McClellanville Septic System Management A Proposal December 2005

This Proposal offers an overview of an onsite management system program for the Town of McClellanville that has been prepared at the request of Town Council. It consists of four components that together provide a reasonable and non-intrusive means of septic system management. A system that should protect the surface and ground waters, and the health of the citizens of McClellanville and surrounding areas.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS: The education of the citizenry in the proper operation and maintenance of septic systems is probably the most important function that the Town can provide. With an understanding of the septic systems function, most citizens will conscientiously care for their system. To assist with this, the following informational materials should be provided to new homeowners settling in the Town of McClellanville for their guidance and reference:

A Reference Guide, Your Septic System, for Homeowners. Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc. 145 W. Campbell Ave., Roanoke, VA 24001-2868. www.sercap.org

and

Water Lines, February 2004 issue, Mount Pleasant Waterworks, 1619 Rifle Range Rd, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464. www.mountpleasantwaterworks.com

Your Septic System is an excellent, very readable overview of how septic systems function, their care and maintenance, and includes a comprehensive listing of “Dos” and “Do Nots.” The emphasis of the Mount Pleasant Waterworks issue of *Water Lines* is on conservation and has information on “low-flow” fixtures, and how to check for leaks in household water systems, leaks – the silent killer of septic systems.

In addition to the brochures, each homeowner should be given the refrigerator magnet, *Not in My Septic System*, produced by SCDHEC, to place on their refrigerators as a constant reminder of the “Cloggers” and “Killers” of septic systems.

POST CARD REMINDERS: A voluntary system of notification to homeowners on the status of the inspection of their septic system should be implemented. The Town would utilize the current OMS Data Base of septic system (Attachment 1) prepared by Cofer-Shabica (2005), to determine those

systems in need of inspection. As new homes are constructed within the Town, the septic system and home information should be added to the Data Base. At the appropriate dates, postcard (Attachment 2) reminders would be sent out to the owners of those systems to inform them know that the date for their septic system maintenance was approaching and that regular maintenance/inspection might be needed. The response to the reminder post card would be entirely voluntary. The two-part postcard would include a portion that the property owner would return to the Town to indicate whether or not the maintenance was done, so that the Town's Data Base could be updated. Again, the response to the postcard reminders and any maintenance work would be voluntary on the part of the property owner.

Only 40 to 50 systems per year would be due for maintenance and need reminders, so that Town staff should not be burdened with a greatly increased workload.

DATA BASE MANAGEMENT: All of the information on the state of over 200 septic systems in the Town, collected during the grant-funded survey (Cofer-Shabica, 2005) has been entered into the Town's Data Base. The data include the parcel identification number, names and addresses of property owners, number of bedrooms, information on the age of the septic system and when, if ever, the system had last been pumped out, and a recommended ten-year schedule for future maintenance inspections or pump-outs, on a five-year rotation.

It is important to maintain a good record of the status of the septic systems in the Town. Such a record would be useful to the Town as evidence that septic systems were being managed through an inspection and maintenance program, and that the systems were functioning properly.

FUNDING FOR REPAIRS: The repair and even replacement of malfunctioning septic systems is critical to the success of a septic management system. Sources of funds for such assistance are the Southeast Rural Community Assistance Program, Berkeley Electric Cooperative, and the South Carolina State Revolving Fund.

Reference: Cofer-Shabica, S. 2005. *Onsite Disposal System Evaluations In The Town of McClellanville, South Carolina*. Shabica & Associates, Inc., Mt. Pleasant, SC. 21 pp, plus Appendices.

Prepared by Stephen Cofer-Shabica, 1 December 2005

Adopted by Town of McClellanville, Town Council, January 9, 2006.